*Applicable on payment of instalments on or before due date.

Note:

(i) In case payment of the instalment is not received on or before due date, normal rate (effective+1%) would be applicable.

(ii) Penal rate of interest in case of default will continue @2.5% above normal rate.

(iii) At present, SBMTLR is 11.25%

(iv) Interest will be charged as applicable at the time of release of funds.

(v) Revised rates shall be effective *w.e.f.* 1.12.2002. Interest rates are subject to change from time to time.

Kharif crop production

3148. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimate of Kharif crop output this season;

(b) what was the total production of this crop last year;

(c) the causes of downfall this year; and

(d) steps taken to increase production in coming years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYANYADAV): (a) and (b) The all-India estimates of production of rice, coarse cereals, oilseeds, cotton, jute & mesta and sugarcane during the kharif seasons 2001-02 and 2002-03 are given below:

(In million tonnes)

	2001-2002*	2002-03*	Change in 2002-03 over 2001-02
Rice	79.36	66.86	-12.50
Coarse Cereals	27.06	19.54	-7.52
Oilseeds@	13.20	9.89	-3.31
Cotton#	11.69	9.08	-2.61

	2001-2002*	2002-03*	Change in 2002-03 over 2001-02
Jute & Mesta##	10.79	10.73	-0.06
Sugarcane	292.21	276.39	-15.82

*Fourth Advance Estimates for 2001-02 as on 27.06.2002
**First Advance Estimates for 2002-03 as on 12.11.2002
@Includes Groundnut, Castorseed, Sesamum, Nigerseed, Sunflower, Soyabean.
#Million bales of 170 kgs.
##Million bales of 180 kgs.

(c) The production of kharif crop this year is low because of severe drought in a number of States.

(d) Even though the agricultural production in the country shows a long-term upward trend, in order to further improve production and productivity of agricultural commodities, the Government have launched various measures such as promotion of watershed development programmes, emphasis on developing and promoting new technologies, measures for increasing availability of agricultural credit, Market Information Network, National Agriculture Insurance Scheme etc. Besides, the Government also encourage farmers to increase production through price policy which includes implementation of Minimum Support Price, procurement by public agencies etc. Apart from these, the Government have also switched over from the conventional schematic approach to macro management mode from November, 2000 for providing assistance to the States so as to give flexibility to States to address specific problems faced by them depending on local requirements. These measures would be continued in the coming years as well.

Voluntary Separation Scheme in HFCL

3149. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item